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Commission on the Status of Women
Fiftieth session
27 February-10 March 2006
Agenda item 7
Adoption of the report of the Commission on its fiftieth session

Draft report

Rapporteur: Dicky **Komar** (Indonesia)

Chapter ___
Organization of the session

A. Opening and duration of the session

1. The Commission on the Status of Women held its fiftieth session at United Nations Headquarters on 22 March 2005 and from 27 February to 10 March 2006. The Commission held _____ meetings (1st to __).

2. The session was opened by the Chairperson of the Commission, Carmen María Gallardo (El Salvador), who also made a statement.

3. At the 2nd meeting, on 27 February 2006, the Deputy Secretary-General of the United Nations and the President of the Economic and Social Council addressed the Commission.

4. The Commission viewed a short video presentation highlighting the four World Conferences on Women.

5. At the same meeting, a statement was made by the Assistant Secretary-General and Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women.

B. Attendance

6. The session was attended by representatives of 45 States members of the Commission. Observers of other States Members of the United Nations and for non-Member States, representatives of organizations of the United Nations system and

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observers for intergovernmental, non-governmental and other organizations also attended.

C. Officers of the Commission

7. In accordance with paragraph 2 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1987/21, the officers elected to the Bureau of the Commission should serve for a term of office of two years. The following officers were elected at the 1st meeting of the fiftieth session, on 22 March 2005:

Chairperson:

Carmen María Gallardo (El Salvador)

Vice-Chairpersons:

Szilvia Szabo (Hungary)

Adekunbi Abibat Sonaike (Nigeria)

Thomas Woodroffe (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)

Dicky Komar (Indonesia)

8. At its 2nd meeting, on 27 February 2006, the Commission appointed Dicky Komar (Indonesia) to serve as Vice-Chairperson-cum-Rapporteur for the fiftieth and fifty-first sessions.

D. Agenda and organization of work

9. At its 2nd meeting, on 27 February, the Commission adopted its provisional agenda and approved its organization of work as contained in document E/CN.6/2006/1. The agenda read as follows:

1. Election of officers.
2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.
3. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century":
   (a) Review of gender mainstreaming in entities of the United Nations system;
   (b) Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men;
   (c) Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives:
      (i) Enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work;

(ii) Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels.

4. Communications concerning the status of women.

5. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions.

6. Provisional agenda for the fifty-first session of the Commission.

7. Adoption of the report of the Commission on its fiftieth session.

E. Appointment of the members of a working group on communications on the status of women

10. Pursuant to Economic and Social Council resolution 1983/27, the Commission established a working group to consider communications concerning the status of women. The following five members, nominated by their regional groups, were appointed:

Nadjeh Baaziz (Algeria)

Lara Romano (Croatia)

Jorge Cumberbach Miguén (Cuba)

Westmoreland Palon (Malaysia)

Heda Samson (Netherlands)

11. The working group held ___ meetings.

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Provisional agenda for the fifty-first session of the Commission

Provisional agenda and documentation

1. Election of officers.

2. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

   Documentation

   Annotated provisional agenda and proposed organization of work

3. Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century":

   (a) Implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives;

   Documentation

   [To be determined]

   (b) Emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men;

   Documentation

   [To be determined]

   (c) Gender mainstreaming, situations and programmatic matters.

   Documentation

   Report of the Secretary-General on the situation of and assistance to Palestinian women

   Report of the joint workplan of the Division for the Advancement of Women and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

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Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the United Nations Development Fund for Women on the activities of the Fund to eliminate violence against women

Note by the Secretariat transmitting the results of the thirty-seventh session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women

Note by the Secretariat on the proposed programme of work of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women for the biennium 2008-2009

4. Communications concerning the status of women.

Documentation

Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the list of confidential communications concerning the status of women

5. Follow-up to Economic and Social Council resolutions and decisions.

Documentation

Letter from the President of the Economic and Social Council addressed to the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women

Note by the Secretariat as input to the high-level segment of the 2007 substantive session of the Economic and Social Council

6. Provisional agenda for the fifty-second session of the Commission.

7. Adoption of the report of the Commission at its fifty-first session.

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Agenda item 2
Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women

The Commission on the Status of Women recommends to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Future organization and methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women

The Economic and Social Council,

Recalling its resolution 2005/48 of 27 July 2005, in which the Council welcomed the progress made in the review of the working methods of several functional commissions and invited those functional commissions and other relevant subsidiary bodies that had not yet done so to continue to examine their methods of work, as mandated by the General Assembly in its resolution 57/270 B of 23 June 2003, in order to better pursue the implementation of the outcomes of major United Nations conferences and summits, and to submit their reports to the Council in 2006,

Reaffirming the primary responsibility of the Commission on the Status of Women for the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,[1]

Recognizing that the organization of work of the Commission should contribute to advancing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action[2] and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,

Recognizing also that the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the

[1] General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.

[2] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.

General Assembly and the fulfilment of the obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women[3] are mutually reinforcing in achieving gender equality and the empowerment of women,

Reaffirming that gender mainstreaming constitutes a critical strategy in the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, and underlining the catalytic role of the Commission in promoting gender mainstreaming,

Recognizing the importance of non-governmental organizations, as well as other civil society actors, in advancing the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and, in this respect, to the work of the Commission,

A.
Methods of work of the Commission on the Status of Women

1. *Decides* that, from its fifty-first session, the Commission on the Status of Women will consider one priority theme at each session, based on the Beijing Platform for Action[2] and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly;[1]

2. *Also decides* that the Commission will continue to hold, on an annual basis, a general discussion on the follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century", and recommends that statements identify goals attained, achievements, gaps and challenges in relation to the implementation of previous commitments made with regard to the priority theme;

3. *Further decides* that the annual interactive high-level roundtable will focus on experiences, lessons learned and good practices, including results with supporting data, where available, in relation to the implementation of previous commitments made with regard to the priority theme;

4. *Decides* that each year the Commission will discuss ways and means to accelerate implementation of the previous commitments made with regard to the priority theme through:

(a) An interactive expert panel to identify key policy initiatives in order to accelerate their implementation;

(b) An interactive expert panel on capacity-building on gender mainstreaming in relation to the priority theme, based on an exchange of national and regional experiences, lessons learned and good practices, including results with supporting data, where available, with the participation of technical experts and statisticians;

5. *Also decides* that there will be one outcome to the annual discussions on the priority theme, in the form of agreed conclusions, negotiated by all States, which shall both identify gaps and challenges in the implementation of previous commitments and make action-oriented recommendations for all States, relevant intergovernmental bodies, mechanisms and entities of the United Nations system

[3] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 1249, No. 20378.

and other relevant stakeholders in order to accelerate implementation, and which would be widely disseminated to the United Nations system, where relevant, and made widely available by all States to the public in their own countries, as appropriate;

6. *Further decides* that each year the Commission will evaluate progress in the implementation of the agreed conclusions on a priority theme from a previous session through an interactive dialogue among all States and observers to identify means to accelerate implementation, focusing on national and regional activities in support of the implementation of the agreed conclusions, including, where appropriate, supported by reliable statistics, sex-disaggregated data and other quantitative and qualitative information to illustrate monitoring and reporting;

7. *Decides* that the outcome of this evaluation will be in the form of a Chairperson's summary prepared in consultation with the regional groups, through the members of the Bureau;

8. *Also decides* that the Commission will continue to discuss emerging issues, trends and new approaches to issues affecting the situation of women or equality between women and men that require urgent consideration;

9. *Requests* the Bureau of the Commission, prior to each session, to identify, in consultation with all States through their regional groups, an emerging issue for consideration at the Commission, taking into account developments at the global and regional levels as well as planned activities within the United Nations, where increased attention to gender perspectives is required;

10. *Decides* that the emerging issue will be addressed by an interactive expert panel focusing on achievements, gaps and challenges through an exchange of national and regional experiences, lessons learned and good practices, including results with supporting data, where available, and that the outcome of this discussion will be in the form of a Chairperson's summary prepared in consultation with the regional groups, through the members of the Bureau;

11. *Requests* that the Division for the Advancement of Women, from its fifty-first session, organize a panel event in the margins of each annual session of the Commission to enable a preliminary discussion on the priority theme of the subsequent session;

12. *Invites* all gender-specific United Nations entities and other relevant United Nations entities, including the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, to contribute, where appropriate, to the discussion on the priority theme of the Commission;

13. *Decides*, in view of the traditional importance of non-governmental organizations in the advancement of women, that, in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolutions 1996/6 of 22 July 1996 and 1996/31 of 25 July 1996, such organizations should be encouraged to participate in the work of the Commission and in the monitoring and implementation process related to the Fourth World Conference on Women to the maximum extent possible, and requests the Secretary-General to make appropriate arrangements to ensure full utilization of existing channels of communication with non-governmental organizations in order to facilitate broad-based participation and dissemination of information;

14. *Notes* with appreciation the continuation of the annual parliamentary meetings organized by the Inter-Parliamentary Union as well as the programme of side events held on the occasion of the sessions of the Commission;

15. *Invites* the regional commissions to continue to contribute to the work of the Commission;

16. *Encourages* all States to consider including technical experts and statisticians, including from ministries with expertise relevant to the themes under consideration, as well as representatives of non-governmental organizations and other civil society actors, as appropriate, on their delegations to the Commission;

17. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission on an annual basis a report on the priority theme which includes proposals for possible indicators, elaborated in cooperation with the Statistical Commission, to measure progress in implementation with regard to the priority theme;

18. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the Commission on an annual basis a report on progress in mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development, implementation and evaluations of national policies and programmes, with a particular focus on the priority theme;

19. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to include in the annual report to the General Assembly on measures taken and progress achieved in the follow-up to the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly and the annual report to the Economic and Social Council on the review and appraisal of the system-wide implementation of the Economic and Social Council's agreed conclusions 1997/2 on mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes in the United Nations system an assessment of the impact of the Commission's input to discussions within the United Nations system;

20. *Welcomes* the continuation of the biennial consideration by the Commission of the proposed programme of work of the Office of the Special Adviser on Gender Issues and Advancement of Women and the Division for the Advancement of Women;

21. *Decides* that the Commission, at its fifty-third session, should review the functioning of its revised methods of work, in the light of the outcome of the discussions on strengthening of the Economic and Social Council, in order to ensure the effective functioning of the Commission;

22. *Also decides* that, at its fifty-third session, the Commission will discuss the possibility of conducting a review and appraisal of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action of the Fourth World Conference on Women and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly in 2010;

B. Themes for the period 2007-2009

23. *Further decides* that:

(a) In 2007, the priority theme will be "The elimination of all forms of discrimination and violence against the girl child" and that progress will be evaluated in the implementation of the agreed conclusions from the forty-eighth

session of the Commission on "The role of men and boys in achieving gender equality";

(b) In 2008, the priority theme will be "Financing for gender equality and the empowerment of women" and that progress will be evaluated in the implementation of the agreed conclusions from the forty-eighth session of the Commission on "Women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and conflict resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding";

(c) In 2009, the priority theme will be "The equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS" and that progress will be evaluated in the implementation of the agreed conclusions from the fiftieth session of the Commission on "The equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels".

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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels

Draft agreed conclusions submitted by the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women

Equal participation of women and men in decision-making processes at all levels

1. The Commission on the Status of Women reaffirms the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[1] which emphasizes that without the active participation of women and the incorporation of women's perspectives at all levels of decision-making, the goals of equality, development and peace cannot be achieved, and that women's equal participation is a necessary condition for women's and girls' interests to be taken into account and is needed in order to strengthen democracy and promote its proper functioning.

2. The Commission reaffirms the outcome document adopted at the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly,[2] paragraph 23 of which acknowledges that despite general acceptance of the need for gender balance in decision-making bodies at all levels, a gap between de jure and de facto equality has persisted, and that women continue to be underrepresented in legislative, ministerial and sub-ministerial levels, as well as at the highest levels of the corporate sector and other economic and social institutions, and drew attention to the obstacles that hinder women's entry into decision-making positions.

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), para. 181.

[2] Resolution S-23/3, annex.

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3. The Commission further reaffirms the commitment to the equal participation of women and men in public life enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention on the Political Rights of Women,[3] which states that women shall be, on equal terms with men and without any discrimination, entitled to vote in all elections, eligible for election to all publicly elected bodies established by national law and entitled to hold public office and to exercise all public functions established by national law.

4. The Commission recalls the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, which states, inter alia, that States parties should take all appropriate measures, including positive measures and temporary special measures, to eliminate discrimination against women and girls in the political and public life of the country.[4]

5. The Commission urges States parties to comply fully with their obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto and to take into consideration the concluding comments as well as the general recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women.[5]

6. The Commission notes that some States parties have modified their reservations, expresses satisfaction that some reservations have been withdrawn and urges States parties to limit the extent of any reservations that they lodge to the Convention, to formulate any such reservations as precisely and as narrowly as possible, to ensure that no reservations are incompatible with the object and purpose of the Convention, to review their reservations regularly with a view to withdrawing them and to withdraw reservations that are contrary to the object and purpose of the Convention.[6]

7. The Commission recalls paragraph 1 of resolution 58/142 of 22 December 2003 on women and political participation, in which the General Assembly urges all stakeholders to develop a comprehensive set of programmes and policies to increase women's participation, especially in political decision-making.

8. The Commission also recalls that its agreed conclusions 1997/2 on women in power and decision-making recognizes the need to accelerate the implementation of strategies that promote gender balance in political decision-making and to mainstream a gender perspective in all stages of policy formulation and decision-making.

9. The Commission welcomes the 2005 World Summit, which reaffirmed that the full and effective implementation of the goals and objectives of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action was an essential contribution to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including Millennium Development Goals, and resolved to promote increased representation of women in Government decision-making bodies, including through ensuring their equal opportunity to participate fully in the political process.[7]

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[3] Resolution 217 A (III), resolution 2200 A (XXI), annex, and resolution 640 (VII), annex.

[4] Resolution 34/180, annex.

[5] General Assembly resolution 60/230, para. 4.

[6] Ibid., para. 6.

[7] Resolution 60/1, para. 58.

10. The Commission recognizes that some progress has been achieved since the Fourth World Conference on Women in women's participation in decision-making at all levels. Introduction of policies and programmes, including positive measures, at the local, national and international levels, has resulted in an increase in women's participation in decision-making processes.

11. The Commission expresses concern at the serious and persistent obstacles, which are many and varied in nature, that still hinder the advancement of women and further affect their participation in decision-making processes, including, inter alia, the persistent feminization of poverty, lack of equal access to health, education, training, employment, armed conflict, lack of security, and natural disasters.

12. The Commission underlines the importance of the empowerment of women and their effective participation in decision- and policymaking processes as critical tools to prevent and eliminate gender-based violence, and further recognizes that eliminating all forms of violence against women and girls enables them to participate equally in decision-making.

13. The Commission further expresses concern about the lack of sufficient information and sex-disaggregated data at the local, national, regional and international levels on the participation of women and men in decision-making processes in all areas, including the economy, the public and private sector, the judiciary, international affairs, academia, trade unions, the media, non-governmental organizations, and others.

14. The Commission reaffirms the important role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding, and stresses the importance of their full and equal participation in all efforts to maintain and promote peace and security and the need to increase their role in decision-making with regard to conflict prevention and resolution and the rebuilding of post-conflict society, in accordance with Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 and the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly.[8]

15. The Commission recognizes that gender equality, development and peace are key issues for the promotion of women, and that new efforts are needed by all actors to create an enabling environment in decision-making.

16. The Commission reaffirms the urgent goal of achieving 50/50 gender distribution in all categories of posts within the United Nations system, especially at senior and policymaking levels, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations, and also taking into account the continuing lack of representation of underrepresentation of women from certain countries, in particular from developing countries, from countries with economies in transition and from unrepresented or largely underrepresented Member States.[9]

17. The Commission urges Governments, and/or, as appropriate, the relevant entities of the United Nations system, other international and regional organizations, including the international financial institutions, national parliaments, political parties, civil society, including the private sector, trade unions, academia, the media, non-governmental organizations, and other actors, to take the following actions:

[8] See resolution 58/142, preamble.

[9] See General Assembly resolution 58/144, para. 3.

(a) Ensure that women have the right to vote and exercise this right without duress, persuasion or coercion;

(b) Review, as appropriate, existing legislation, including electoral law, and remove or modify, as appropriate, provisions that hinder women's equal participation in decision-making, and adopt positive actions and temporary special measures, as appropriate, to enhance women's equal participation in decision-making processes at all levels;

(c) Establish concrete goals, targets and benchmarks for achieving equal participation of women and men in decision-making bodies at all levels and in all areas, especially in areas of macroeconomic policy, trade, labour, budgets, defence and foreign affairs, media, judiciary, including through positive actions and temporary special measures, as appropriate;

(d) Develop and fund policies and programmes, including innovative measures, to build a critical mass of women leaders, executives and managers, with the goal of achieving a gender balance at all levels and in all areas, in particular in strategic economic, social and political decision-making positions;

(e) Establish the goal of gender balance in decision-making in administration and public appointments at all levels, develop alternative approaches and changes in institutional structures and practices, including gender action plans, which establish concrete strategies and budgets for the achievement of consistent gender mainstreaming as a strategy for promoting gender equality objectives, in legislation and public policies, among others;

(f) Ensure women's full and equal participation and representation at all decision-making levels in all aspects of peace processes and in post-conflict peacebuilding, reconstruction, rehabilitation and reconciliation processes;

(g) Encourage greater involvement of all marginalized women in decision-making at all levels and address and counter the barriers faced by marginalized women in accessing and participating in politics and decision-making;[10]

(h) Ensure that gender perspectives are incorporated in development policies and programmes, and in the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals, to ensure that women and all other members of society benefit from development and that women are empowered to assume leadership positions;

(i) Promote and strengthen international cooperation to accelerate the development process in which women play a key role and should be equal beneficiaries;

(j) Introduce more effective measures aimed at eradicating poverty of women and improving their living conditions, to promote the realization of their full human potential to enable their advancement and their equal participation in decision-making;

(k) Ensure that women and girls have equal access to education in all forms and ensure that education is gender-sensitive, and further promote educational programmes in which women and girls will be equipped with the necessary

[10] General Assembly resolution 58/142, para. 1 (k).

knowledge and will be prepared to participate equally in decision-making processes in all spheres of life and at all levels;

(l) Ensure women's and girls' access to training that enables them to develop their skills, capacities and expertise to exercise leadership, including tools, training and special programmes necessary to enter, inter alia, into politics, including at the highest levels, recognizing existing power differentials in society and the need to respect different positive models of leadership;

(m) Ensure women's equal access to decent work, full and productive employment, productive and financial resources and information, in order to facilitate their full and equal participation in decision-making processes at all levels;

(n) Introduce objective and transparent procedures for recruitment and gender-sensitive career planning to enable women to assume decision-making positions at all levels and in all areas in order to break the glass ceiling;[11]

(o) Eliminate occupational segregation, gender wage gaps, as well as discrimination against women, including marginalized women, in the labour market, through legal and policy measures, including by increasing opportunities for women and girls as well as men and boys to work in non-traditional sectors;

(p) Ensure women's access to microcredit and microfinance schemes, which have proven to be effective means to empower women and can create an enabling environment to facilitate their full and equal participation in the decision-making processes at all levels, particularly at the grass-roots level;

(q) Foster an enabling environment in decision-making processes at all levels, including through measures aimed at reconciling family and employment responsibilities, inter alia, by better sharing of paid and unpaid work between women and men;

(r) Take measures to prevent and eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls in order to promote their full and equal participation in public and political life;

(s) Promote women's leadership in all areas and at all levels and remove all barriers that directly or indirectly hinder the participation of women, in order to increase the visibility and influence of women in decision-making processes;

(t) Facilitate networking and mentoring among women leaders and girls, as appropriate, at all levels and in all areas, including in politics, academia, trade unions, the media and civil society organizations, specifically women's groups and networks, including through the use of information and communication technology, as appropriate;

(u) Encourage, particularly among men as well as women in decision-making positions, the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women and support women's participation, representation and leadership in decision-making processes at all levels, including the exchange of best practices and awareness-raising;

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[11] Commission on the Status of Women agreed conclusions 1997/3, para. 10.

(v) Develop strategies to increase the involvement of men and boys in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women, through, inter alia, encouraging the sharing of household work and care;

(w) Develop strategies to eliminate gender stereotypes in all spheres of life, particularly in the media, and foster the positive portrayal of women and girls as leaders and decision makers on all levels and in all areas;

(x) Recognize the importance of women's participation in decision-making in all areas, including the political process, provide fair and balanced coverage of male and female candidates, cover participation in women's political organizations and ensure coverage of issues that have a particular impact on women;[12]

(y) Adopt clear rules, as necessary, for candidate selection within parties, including, as appropriate, the implementation of concrete goals, targets and benchmarks, including, where appropriate, temporary special measures, such as quotas, for achieving equitable representation of women candidates in elected positions;

(z) Promote women's candidacies in elections, inter alia and as appropriate, through the adoption of specific measures, such as training programmes and recruitment drives and, as a temporary special measure, consider funding for women candidates;

(aa) Make efforts to ensure equal opportunities during election campaigns, including equal access to the media and to financial and other resources, as appropriate;

(bb) Facilitate the inclusion of women in decision-making positions within electoral management bodies and observer commissions and give consideration to gender equality and the empowerment of women in the structure and activities of such bodies;

(cc) Consider establishing parliamentary standing or ad hoc committees or other statutory bodies on gender equality and empowerment of women, with cross-party representation, where appropriate, to monitor and review the implementation of existing laws and constitutional provisions, in line with the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, where applicable, and the commitments to implement the Beijing Platform for Action and the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, as well as taking into account recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, where applicable;

(dd) Consider ratifying and implementing relevant instruments relating to full political, economic, social and cultural rights for women and girls, especially the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child;

(ee) Reaffirm the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a vital instrument for the advancement of women; and in this regard take measures to

[12] General Assembly resolution 58/142, para. 2 (m).

achieve the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals;

(ff) Encourage public dissemination of national periodic reports to the Committee on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, as well as concluding comments provided by the Committee;

(gg) Promote collaboration among all relevant actors, such as parliaments, national machineries for the advancement of women and other relevant national mechanisms and women's groups and networks in civil society to advance gender equality and the empowerment of women;

(hh) Support the mainstreaming of a gender perspective at all levels and stages of the budgetary process, including through awareness-raising and training, where appropriate;

(ii) Strengthen research, monitoring and evaluation of the progress of women's participation in decision-making at all levels, in particular in areas where there is a dearth of information, including, as appropriate, through the development of acceptable standardized methodology for systematic collection of gender-specific data and statistics, disaggregated by sex and other relevant factors; and disseminate lessons learned and full practices;

(jj) Ensure political will to recognize the role of women in development in all spheres of life, to promote gender equality and favour the participation of women in decision-making positions.

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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work

Draft agreed conclusions submitted by the Chairperson of the Commission on the Status of Women

Enhanced participation of women in development: an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, taking into account, inter alia, the fields of education, health and work

The Commission on the Status of Women

1. *Reaffirms* the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action,[1] the outcome document of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century",[2] the United Nations Millennium Declaration,[3] the Declaration adopted by the Commission on the Status of Women on the occasion of the tenth anniversary of the Fourth World Conference on Women,[4] the 2005 World Summit Outcome,[5] as well as all relevant General Assembly resolutions and outcomes of United Nations

[1] *Report of the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 4-15 September 1995* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.96.IV.13), chap. I, resolution 1, annexes I and II.
[2] General Assembly resolution S-23/2, annex, and resolution S-23/3, annex.
[3] General Assembly resolution 55/2.
[4] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2005, Supplement No. 27* and corrigendum (E/2005/27 and Corr.1), chap. I.A.
[5] General Assembly resolution 60/1.

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conferences, and reiterates that women's empowerment and their full participation on the basis of equality in all spheres of society, including participation in the decision-making process and access to power, are fundamental for the achievement of equality, development, peace and security, and emphasizes the need to ensure the full integration and full participation of women as both agents and beneficiaries in the development process and its commitment to strengthening and safeguarding a national and international enabling environment, inter alia, through promoting and protecting all human rights and fundamental freedoms, mainstreaming a gender perspective into all policies and programmes and promoting the full participation and empowerment of women and enhanced international cooperation;

2. *Reaffirms also* that the full and effective implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action is an essential contribution to achieving the internationally agreed development goals, including those contained in the Millennium Declaration, and that the promotion of gender equality and the empowerment of women is of fundamental importance in sustainable development, achieving sustained economic growth, eradicating poverty and hunger and in combating diseases, and that investing in the development of women and girls has a multiplier effect, in particular on productivity, efficiency and sustained economic growth, in all sectors of the economy, especially in key areas such as agriculture, industry and services;

3. *Recalls* that the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women stresses that the full and complete development of a country, the welfare of the world and the cause of peace require the maximum participation of women on equal terms with men in all fields;

4. *Recognizes* that all forms of violence against women and girls violates the enjoyment of their human rights and constitutes a major impediment to the ability of women and girls to make use of their capabilities, limiting their participation and agency in development, including in the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

5. *Recognizes also* that the creation of an enabling environment at all levels is necessary to enhance women's participation in and benefit from development processes and that challenges to the creation of an enabling environment include:

(a) Insufficient coherence and coordination between development policies and gender equality policies and strategies;

(b) Insufficient time-bound targets for implementation of gender equality policies and strategies;

(c) Underrepresentation of women in decision-making;

(d) Insufficient promotion and protection of the full enjoyment by women of all human rights;

(e) Persistent violence and multiple forms of discriminatory practices and attitudes against women;

(f) Insufficient recognition of the contributions of women to the economy and to all areas of public life;

(g) Unequal access to education and training, health care and decent work;

(h) Unequal access to opportunities and unequal access to and control over resources, such as land, credit, capital, economic assets and information and communication technologies;

(i) Insufficient political will and resources;

(j) Inadequate implementation of gender mainstreaming;

(k) Insufficient national mechanisms for monitoring, evaluation and accountability;

(l) Impact on women of HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other communicable diseases;

(m) Armed conflicts, lack of security and natural disasters;

(n) Slow and uneven implementation of commitments to the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals;

(o) Persistence of difficult socio-economic conditions that exist in many developing countries, which has resulted in the acceleration of the feminization of poverty;

(p) Insufficient international cooperation in the area of gender equality and empowerment of women in the context of poverty eradication and health, bearing in mind financing for development;

(q) Prevailing harmful cultural and traditional practices;

(r) Insufficient information and sex-disaggregated data and statistics;

(s) Insufficient progress in the promulgation of gender-responsive laws;

6. *Underlines* that addressing such challenges at all levels requires a systematic, comprehensive, integrated, multidisciplinary and multisectoral approach, with policy, legislative and programmatic interventions;

7. *Urges* Governments and/or, as appropriate, the relevant entities of the United Nations system, other international and regional organizations, including the international financial institutions, national parliaments, political parties, civil society, including the private sector, trade unions, academia, the media and non-governmental organizations and other actors, to take the following actions:

(a) Incorporate gender perspectives into all local and national planning, budgetary, monitoring and evaluation and reporting processes and mechanisms relating to national development strategies, including strategies focused on the implementation of internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, fully utilizing existing gender equality policies and strategies;

(b) Elaborate and implement comprehensive gender-sensitive poverty eradication strategies that address social, structural and macroeconomic issues;

(c) Develop and implement effective national monitoring and evaluation mechanisms at all levels to evaluate progress towards gender equality, including through the collection, compilation and analysis and use of age- and sex-disaggregated data and gender statistics, and continue developing and using appropriate qualitative and quantitative indicators;

(d) Encourage and promote close cooperation between central authorities and local governments to develop programmes aimed at the achievement of gender equality, thereby granting equal opportunities for women and girls;

(e) Elaborate and implement strategies and policies, including targeted measures in support of their obligation to exercise due diligence to prevent all forms of violence against women and girls, provide protection to victims and investigate, prosecute and punish perpetrators of such violence and recognize that violence against women and girls is a serious obstacle to the achievement of the objectives of equality, development and peace and has a negative impact on the social and economic development of communities and States;

(f) Continue efforts towards full and effective implementation of General Assembly resolution 57/337 of 3 July 2003 on prevention of armed conflict and its agreed conclusions on women's equal participation in conflict prevention, management and resolution and in post-conflict peacebuilding;[6]

(g) Continue efforts towards the full and effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) of 31 October 2000 on women and peace and security, recognizing the linkages between gender equality, peace, security and development;

(h) Take the necessary measures to ensure that women are accorded full and equal rights to own land and other property, including through inheritance;

(i) Take all appropriate measures to enable women to participate fully in decision-making at all levels in all aspects of their daily lives;

(j) Incorporate gender perspectives in all policies and programmes on international migration, promote the full enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by women migrants and combat discrimination, exploitation, ill-treatment, unsafe working conditions, violence, including sexual violence and trafficking, and facilitate family reunification in an expeditious and effective manner with due regard to applicable laws as such reunification has a positive effect on the integration of migrants;

(k) Eliminate all forms of discrimination, sexual exploitation and violence against female refugees, asylum-seekers and internally displaced persons and promote their active involvement in decisions affecting their lives and communities, while recalling the relevant norms of international human rights law, international humanitarian law and international refugee law;

(l) Increase understanding of and capacity to implement gender mainstreaming as a strategy for achieving gender equality and women's empowerment, including by requiring the use of gender analysis as the basis for all policy and programme development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, in particular in the areas of health, education and employment;

(m) Develop and promote strategies to mainstream a gender perspective into design and implementation of development and socio-economic policies and in budgetary processes and share best practices and encourage innovations in gender mainstreaming approaches;

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[6] Economic and Social Council resolution 2004/12.

(n) Mobilize adequate funding for gender-sensitive development policies and programmes and for national mechanisms for gender equality, through national, regional and international resource mobilization and gender-responsive budget processes in all sector areas and allocate adequate funding for women-specific measures;

(o) Support women's organizations that strive to empower women and girls and improve their living conditions;

(p) Encourage enhanced coordination and collaboration between all mechanisms for the advancement of women and gender equality at all levels, such as women's ministries, gender equality commissions, relevant parliamentary committees, ombudspersons and gender focal points and working groups in line ministries, as well as with women's groups, associations and networks;

(q) Take effective measures to eliminate discrimination, gender stereotypes and harmful traditional, cultural and customary practices;

(r) Develop and implement strategies to increase the involvement of men and boys in promoting gender equality and empowerment of women and girls through, inter alia, the elimination of all forms of violence against women and girls, the sharing of household work and family care and the promotion of a culture of peace and tolerance, and encourage men and women to foster responsible sexual and reproductive behaviour and attitudinal changes to promote the realization of gender equality;

(s) Increase women's and girls' equal and effective access to and use of information and communication technologies as well as applied technology, including through the transfer of knowledge and technology on concessional, preferential and favourable terms to developing countries, as mutually agreed, training and infrastructure provision, involvement in the planning, development and production of content and participation in management, governance and decision-making positions in regulatory or policymaking bodies for information and communication technologies;

(t) Invest in appropriate infrastructure and other projects and create opportunities for economic empowerment in order to alleviate the burden of time-consuming everyday tasks on women and girls allowing them, inter alia, to engage in income-generating activities and attend school;

(u) Give special attention to incorporating principles of advancing equalization of opportunities in programmes, methods and processes to empower and support women and girls with disabilities;

(v) Call upon the international community to make efforts to mitigate the effects of excess volatility and economic disruption, which have a disproportionately negative impact on women, and to enhance trade opportunities for developing countries in order to improve the economic situation of women;

(w) Call upon States parties to comply fully with their obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Optional Protocol thereto and to take into consideration the concluding comments as well as the general recommendations of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women, call upon other States parties to the Convention that have not yet done so to consider signing, ratifying or acceding to

the Optional Protocol thereto and to reinforce, in efforts to achieve the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals, the linkages with the implementation of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the outcome of the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, as well as with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development[7] and the key actions for the further implementation of the Programme of Action;

8. *Underlines* the fact that each country has the primary responsibility for its own sustainable development and poverty eradication, that the role of national policies and development strategies cannot be overemphasized and that concerted and concrete measures are required at all levels to enable developing countries to eradicate poverty and achieve sustainable development;

9. *Urges* Governments to ensure that women, especially poor women in developing countries, benefit from the pursuit of effective, equitable, development-oriented and durable solutions to the external debt and debt-servicing problems of developing countries, including the option of official development assistance and debt cancellation, and calls for continued international cooperation;

10. *Encourages* the international community, the United Nations system, the relevant regional and international organizations and the private sector and civil society to:

(a) Assist Governments, at their request, in building institutional capacity and developing national action plans or further implementing existing action plans for the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action;

(b) Provide the necessary financial resources to assist national Governments in their efforts to meet the development targets and benchmarks agreed upon at the major United Nations summits and conferences and their follow-up processes, including the World Summit for Social Development, the Fourth World Conference on Women, the International Conference on Population and Development, the Millennium Summit, the International Conference on Financing for Development, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the Second World Assembly on Ageing and the twenty-third and twenty-fourth special sessions of the General Assembly;

(c) Give priority to assisting the efforts of developing countries to ensure the full and effective participation of women in deciding and implementing development strategies and integrating gender concerns into national programmes, including by providing adequate resources to operational activities for development in support of the efforts of Governments to ensure full and equal access of women to health care, capital, education, training and technology, as well as full and equal participation in all decision-making;

11. *Urges* multilateral donors, and invites international financial institutions, within their respective mandates, and regional development banks to review and implement policies to support national efforts to ensure that a higher proportion of resources reach women, in particular in rural and remote areas;

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[7] *Report of the International Conference on Population and Development, Cairo, 5-13 September 1994* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.95.XIII.18), chap. I, resolution 1, annex.

12. *Underlines* the importance of incorporating a gender, human rights and socio-economic perspective in all policies relevant to education, health and work and to creating an enabling environment for achieving gender equality and the advancement of women, and calls upon Governments to:

(a) Ensure women's and girls' full and equal access to all levels of quality education and training, while ensuring progressively and on the basis of equal opportunities that primary education is compulsory, accessible and available free to all;

(b) Incorporate gender perspectives and human rights in health sector policies and programmes, pay attention to women's specific needs and priorities, ensure women's right to the highest attainable standards of physical and mental health and their access to affordable and adequate health-care services, including sexual and reproductive and maternal health care and life-saving obstetric care in accordance with the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development, and recognize that the lack of economic empowerment and independence increases women's vulnerability to a range of negative consequences, involving the risk of contracting HIV/AIDS, malaria, tuberculosis and other poverty related diseases;

(c) Take all appropriate measures to respond to the concern that the HIV/AIDS pandemic reinforces gender inequalities, that women and girls bear a disproportionate share of the burden imposed by the HIV/AIDS crisis, that they are more easily infected, that they play a key role in care and that they have become more vulnerable to poverty as a result of the HIV/AIDS crisis;

(d) Promote respect and realization of the principles contained in the International Labour Organization Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work and its Follow-up,[8] consider ratification and full implementation of International Labour Organization Conventions, design policies and programmes that are particularly relevant to providing equal access for women to productive employment and decent work, remove structural and legal barriers as well as stereotypical attitudes to gender equality at work, promote equal pay for equal work or work of equal value, promote the recognition of the value of women's unremunerated work and to develop and promote policies that facilitate the reconciliation of employment and family responsibilities and access to work for women with disabilities.

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[8] Adopted on 18 June 1998 by the International Labour Conference at its eighty-sixth session.